

*With W. Kingdon
Compliments*

AN

ORATION

DELIVERED BEFORE

The Medical Society of London,

ON THURSDAY, MARCH 8, 1827,

BEING THE

FIFTY-FOURTH ANNIVERSARY,

BY

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THE Language used by Mr. PEEL in the House of Commons, on the 22d of February last, recommending gradual improvement in the Laws then under consideration, rather than framing a new code, appears peculiarly applicable to the present state of the Medical Profession, which is such as demands the serious yet unprejudiced consideration of every one of its members. That Statesman recommended gradual advance, "without attempting too much, or being led away by visions of splendid improvements, which, however beautiful in theory, may fail altogether when we seek to carry them into execution."



AN ORATION, &c.

WHEN this, “The Medical Society of London,” was first established in the year 1773, it was arranged by the founders that one of its Fellows should be annually appointed to deliver an oration, with a view to point out to the new members the particular objects for which it was founded; to state to all the progress of the society during the past year, and to exhort them to an industrious exertion of their talents, for the still further promoting such objects. In a few years the repetition of this subject became tedious alike to the orator and his audience, and thus commenced a deviation from the original plan, which we of the present day ought much to rejoice at; leaving each appointed gentleman to select a subject that might accord either with the peculiarity of his talents, the branch of the profession to which those talents had been devoted, or perchance to select some subject that might for the time being occupy the attention of the medical public.

We of the present day, I say, have much cause to rejoice at this deviation from the original plan, since to it are we indebted for the pleasure we enjoyed twelve months since on a similar occasion to the present, when we listened to an oration alike elegant and instructive, giving proof of the deep thinking of the orator, and calculated to excite deep thinking on the part of his audience: an oration which has not hitherto, as far as I know, been excelled, and which is not likely to be surpassed for some time to come, although the most pleasing anticipation must have been excited by the just-mentioned name of our next year’s orator.

The Oration of last year, gentlemen, was such as in itself is competent to maintain the dignity of this society, in that particular, for many years; and this conviction is, indeed, to me most gratifying. It has happened that Fellows of this society have been such many

years, and yet remained unacquainted with the particulars of its objects and arrangements; therefore an occasional recurrence, in part, to the original intentions of the Founders of this Oration appears not only admissible, but desirable.

The objects of this society may be deemed threefold:—first, the diffusion of knowledge, so that what might be possessed by the few may be diffused among the many: second, the acquirement of fresh knowledge, with a view to its diffusion: and the third and last, though not the least, the engendering that kindly feeling amongst the different members of the profession without which the profession, as a body, can never receive from the public that respect which its extensive utility, its unlimited benevolence, and its almost unequalled deprivations, authorize it to expect.

The arrangements with a view to effect the first of these objects, i.e. the diffusion of knowledge, are, first, meetings of the society, which take place weekly during about two-thirds of the year, where every encouragement is given to a free, candid, and unreserved communication of cases both successful and unsuccessful, and where a free, candid, and unreserved declaration of opinions tending to prevent, as much as possible, the repetition of the latter, and obtain a more perfect comprehension of the former is most anxiously solicited. These meetings also bear upon the third object of the society, since frequent communication with each other cannot but engender kindly feelings, and such I believe always to be the desire of the practitioner, whether medical or surgical, to benefit his patient to the utmost, that he will avail himself of the presence of his senior, more talented, and more experienced brethren, to obtain information in those cases where his own resources may have failed him; and to the credit of the senior members be it spoken, such information has never been sought in vain; but, on the contrary, they enter into discussion with us, their juniors, as upon equality, using the language of persuasion and simplicity of argument best calculated to encourage investigation. The mere act of relating our own failures, and failures must occur to all, even the best among us, teaches us to have consideration for the failures of others; and thus we learn to avoid those injudicious remarks on an absent brother which establishes in society a disrespectful feeling towards him, a part of the profession, which feeling society, without that authority, would not entertain; and yet there is so much of evil in all our characters that we require to school ourselves to resist the tendency to *self-applause* which seems implied by

the depression of another. Let me intreat you, my junior friends here present, never to yield to this delusion, since it certainly will be visited with the severest penalties upon yourselves.

The second arrangement is a Library, open to the members five days in each week, from which books can be obtained by them, or to which they can apply as to a reading room, should their convenience call them in the neighbourhood of the society's house from ten in the morning till five in the afternoon; and thus does the society offer to its members all the advantages of a valuable library, either for circulation or for reference.

I should fail to perform a common act of justice, much less of gratitude due, were I not to inform you, gentlemen, that the freehold house in which the library is situated, and in which the meetings of the society take place, was presented to us by the late Dr. Lettsom, who, more than any other individual, was instrumental to the formation of the library itself; who, more than any other, devoted his time and his talents, as well as his purse, to the true interests of this society; and it will be felt that the simple relation of these facts is better calculated to do justice to that liberal and indefatigable patron of this institution than any panegyric, that I, or any other, might find language to convey.

The third arrangement is that of a Silver Medal awardable annually to any visiting member who, according to your statutes, may have presented an essay or essays esteemed valuable by the society. This, gentlemen, ought to be sought after, since it is a distinction not only honorable in itself but rendered more so by the high character and great respectability of some who have already received it.

The *diffusion* of medical and surgical knowledge has been within the last fifty years very extensive, and those who have attended the meetings of this and other similar societies must feel that such meetings have been highly instrumental to this effect; and as the Medical Society of London is the senior institution, it rightly indulges itself in the proud feeling of having given rise to all the institutions in the kingdom established for similar purposes. If we look back to the period when this institution was established, it will become a question whether the very feeling on which its establishment depended was not excited by the talents, industry, and liberal enthusiasm of the two Hunters, who, always at work, were also always most anxious that the

advantages arising from their labours should be communicated for the good of their profession, and it will be found on record that Mr. Hunter, who had been long taking every means of propagating his views of diseased action, gave his first course of lectures in the very year that the existence of this society commenced; but if we look back a little further it may become a question as to whether their investigations might not have been excited by the correct and unprejudiced observations of their senior cotemporary, Mr. Pott, to whom I feel justice has never been done, as if totally eclipsed by the brilliancy of his immediate successor. If his papers on *Fistula in Ano* and *Cataract*, as well as on some other subjects, be perused with reference to the time in which he wrote, they will be found to do him great credit, and with him certainly commenced that simplicity of modern English surgery, which must be deemed one of its greatest ornaments.

With the view to obtain knowledge from those members of our profession who may reside at a distance from London, either in this country or abroad, as well as from foreigners, such are admitted as corresponding members; but I fear it has not been generally made known to them that an honorarium of a silver medal is awardable also to any one of that class who may have, by their communications, essentially conduced to the objects of the society, and the pleasure we see evinced by members of our profession possessing silver medals presented by the Royal Humane Society, must, I think, stand in proof that such medals serve as a stimulus of exertion to honorable minds. Such then are the arrangements made by the society with a view to obtain their first object, viz. the *diffusion of knowledge*, and such diffusion has been to a very great extent effected. Has not the desire to teach; rather than the desire to learn, been the cause of this? Its commencement was with the liberality of the Hunters, and it will not be difficult to refer to a late period to prove that the desire to diffuse knowledge is greater than the desire to acquire it. There is one branch of our profession the knowledge of which has not been diffused, although it be possessed by many, and were I to describe the wretchedness which even I have seen entailed on whole families, independent of the deprivations of the unfortunate sufferer from a want of knowledge in this particular branch, there is not, I am sure, a student of this profession within hearing of me, whose honorable feelings would not instantly excite him to a determination to avail himself of the opportunities now offered in London to acquire an efficient knowledge of *ophthalmic surgery*; yet, and it must, I fear,

be deemed a reflection on the pupils who were studying in London at the close of the year 1825 and commencement of 26, a man as well calculated as, I may say better than, any man in England, and perchance I may say Europe, to teach in this branch, had to give lectures on ophthalmic surgery to very nearly empty benches. On these grounds, I say that the desire to teach has exceeded and does exceed the desire to learn. Is there not then due to those who have been so ready to diffuse among us all they know, some respect, some gratitude? Ought we not, while we feel empowered, to offer the front of resistance, in case of threatened oppression, and in such case I would offer it. Ought we not, I say, to show ourselves conscious that the power which knowledge gives has been obtained from a liberal spirit? Should we not, even in the act of opposition, prove to our teachers that we by that opposition honor them? since we thus show ourselves determined to maintain that rank which they have taught us to appreciate. Such, gentlemen, appear to me to be the feelings with which we should give proof of the advance of our profession, an advance the result of knowledge being diffused among us.

The second object of the society is increase of medical and surgical knowledge, and in addition to those arrangements already alluded to is the honorarium of a gold medal, the Fothergillian medal, awardable to the author of the best essay on a given subject. It has happened that subjects have been proposed without any essay being presented, and it has also happened that only one has been presented, and that one so questionable as to its merits, as not to authorize the committee to award to its author the gold medal. This arrangement therefore must be considered to have failed, at least in part, to produce the desired object, which circumstance is fairly referable to the feeling that not to obtain the object particularly sought after, implies defeat; the dread of which acts as a preventive to many able individuals who would otherwise produce what might deserve the reward. The very knowledge that would produce the best essay is generally accompanied by the knowledge, also, of the difficulties which oppose the attainment of excellence, and those who possess both dread defeat more than they desire distinction. The absolute increase of knowledge within the last fifty years, does not appear to have kept pace with the diffusion of that which was already possessed, since, notwithstanding *modern boastings*, careful investigation will fail to detect much that is really new. Great improvements have taken place in the state of our profession as a consequence of the general *diffusion* of knowledge. Great improve-

ments have taken place as the consequence of clearing away the trash that had accumulated during the middle ages of mysticism and ignorance; but in this clearing away, much that was valuable had been removed, which again falling under notice is boasted of as novelty. Anatomical knowledge has been increased as well as diffused, and consequently certain surgical operations have been rendered more perfect, as the works of Sir Astley Cooper and Mr. Lawrence on hernia will prove; but where will be found the vast and boasted increase of physiological and pathological knowledge. The former has been much spoken of and written about, but the increase will be found more in detail than in fact; and it does not appear that to the elders in our profession book-making was so essential to celebrity, or advertisements to practice, as in the present day. A careful comparison of the physiology of the ancients with that at present received on the hackneyed subject of assimilation, will fail to detect much that is really new. The former spoke of a heterogeneous mass, that being moistened by the salivary glands and masticated by the teeth, was passed on into the stomach where it underwent a *concoction* peculiar to that organ; and the only alteration that has taken place as the consequence of vast labour and experiments on myriads of living animals, with a view to prove that the process be either one of trituration, chemical decomposition, simple solution, or under galvanic influence is, that the term *concoction* peculiar to the stomach is to become digestion or chymification; and then, with much closeness of reasoning, the ancients proceed to state that, of the heterogeneous mass so put into the stomach, there must be much that could not be so perfectly concocted in one organ as to be in a state fit to pass to the centre without proving mischievous. They had not the advantage arising from a knowledge of the circulation, but they knew enough to recommend the tying both ends of a bleeding vessel since Celsus describes that operation. They then proceed to the physiology of the liver, by stating that the matter so in part concocted passed on through the gate-vein to the liver, where it underwent still further concoction, by which that portion calculated to prove injurious was separated and passed off as yellow bile. This is a subject that for a long time occupied the attention of the Hunters, who, acquainted with the lacteal and absorbent system, established series of experiments to prove that no absorption did take place through the veins of the intestines, an opinion always questioned by the Monros, and since apparently controverted by subsequent experiments, which have led the experimentalists to conclude that the more deleterious portion of the ingesta does pass through the liver without entering the general circulation; and if these opinions be

correct, we return to the physiology of the ancients, leaving as useless, or comparatively so, all the injuries inflicted on living animals by either one or the other set of experimentalists. A very late writer on digestion expresses a belief that some medicinal substances do pass directly through the intestinal veins to the liver, which, if true, will be, I presume, by some, considered as strongly corroborating the opinion that the deleterious portion of the ingesta is carried to that organ to be subject to abstraction.

If men like the Hunters could be deceived by experiments; men whose love of truth has never been questioned, whose patience under investigation never tired; men of the clearest intellect, and one of them, at least, of the most extensive knowledge; then I say neither true physiology, pathology, or practice can be obtained by experiments on living animals. They may be derived from morbid anatomy, which has been extensively cultivated, but from which the fruits have not been as yet obtained.

Gentlemen whose industry and enthusiasm have led them to these pains-taking investigations by experiments, do not deserve less of their profession because they fail to prove to us what their reasonings had led them to hope for; and although they may be disappointed in the particular object of their search, still anatomical knowledge has been by these means increased. The mere mental vagary of Dr. Gall, and such the first idea must have been, whether his notions of the functions of the different portions of the brain should stand or fall, has led to a knowledge of the anatomy of that organ through the industrious and scientific investigations of Dr. Spurzheim. We cannot but feel astonishment and regret, that although such anatomy, before acknowledged by all to be unknown, has been taught most sedulously for more than ten years by that gentleman, it has not been promulgated through any of the *established* anatomical schools in London; and we cannot but feel still more astonished that the College of Surgeons should not have directed this anatomical knowledge to be propagated, since many of its directors must have been convinced, by demonstration, that Dr. Spurzheim's opinion on the fibrous structure, on the course of fibres, on the addition of fibres, on the commissures and on the communication of the different parts, is correct; and they have always taught us that a knowledge of structure is necessary to, if not able to teach, knowledge of functions. I read with much pleasure, that there are in the sister kingdom those who have expressed their determination to

teach the anatomy of the brain as taught by Dr. Spurzheim, and that Mr. Carmichael, while expressing this determination, did also point out the folly of the present mode of investigation, as it related to the acquirement of a knowledge of structure. Of the opinions of Drs. Gall and Spurzheim, relative to functions, I shall here only remark, that if founded in truth they will prevail, and that their doing so will not, in my opinion, at all interfere with the best feelings either of the man or the Christian.

The attention of the medical public has been of late directed to certain views relating to the circulation of venous blood, as entertained and promulgated by Dr. Barry, an English physician who has been some time at Paris, where he obtained high commendation from the Royal Institute and from the Royal Academy of Medicine. His notions are, that on each expansion of the chest, the tendency to vacuum not only causes a rush of atmospheric air into the trachea, but a rush of blood to the right side of the heart; but as the atmosphere, from its density being less than that of the blood, offers a more ready supply; so that gentleman is led to assert that the anatomical conformation of the parts is such that the lungs, however distended, cannot supply the tendency to vacuum at the venous sinus, or cardiac extremities of the two cavæ; and thus, I trust, we shall find, that even in case of failure in the establishment of his particular views, Dr. Barry will have led to a more correct knowledge of the anatomical positions of the parts within the chest during the actions of life. In the experiments which Dr. Barry has established, he is under the necessity of using tubes which offer resistance to collapse, and these tubes must be in communication with the venous sinus. The tubes which return the blood from the general circulation to the heart, viz. the two cavæ are tubes that do not offer resistance to collapse, and it does therefore appear necessary that we should find in nature tubes corresponding to those used in the experiments, ere those experiments can be considered to correspond with natural processes. Such tubes will be found returning the blood from the liver, where the veins of the intestines form a second ramification ere their contents return to the heart. These tubes are the *venæ cavæ hepaticæ* which do offer resistance to collapse, in consequence of their circumferences being adherent to the surrounding substance of the liver; and these present their openings, not at right angles with the inferior cava, but with a direct course towards the tendinous ring of the diaphragm, with which these openings are in such close vicinity as to secure a free communication between their interior and that of the sinus. From

these combined circumstances I am led to conclude, that, if a tendency to vacuum at the venous sinus on inspiration does exert any influence on the venous circulation, which appears to be proved as far as experiments on living animals are calculated to prove it, such influence can only be exerted on the returning blood from the liver, where, in consequence of the second ramification, without any additional *vis à tergo*, such assistance seems to be required. This view of the effect of the tendency to vacuum avoids two considerable objections to Dr. Barry's conclusions, viz. the foetal circulation and extensive disease of the lungs and heart, producing extensive adhesions of the former, and an obliteration of the pericardiac cavity in the latter. In the foetal circulation very little blood passes through the liver from the intestinal veins, and disease of the liver is the unvarying concomitant of extensive disease of the lungs and heart, as if the liver had become diseased as a consequence of not receiving the natural assistance to its circulation.

Here we cannot refrain from expressions of regret at the loss of one of our fellows, the late Mr. Ellerby, who was the first in this country to establish experiments, or at least to make them public, which he did through this society with a view to investigate the truth of Dr. Barry's conclusions. Mr. Ellerby, urged on by an unquenchable love for his profession, forgot in his arduous exertions that his health was little calculated to support him through the mental and bodily fatigue entailed by such an undertaking, which he did not cease to pursue till within a short period of his death. I fear that circumstance may be attributed to the laudable desire he felt for the establishment of professional truth, and therefore is due that respect from his professional brethren which we usually pay to the memory of those who sacrifice themselves in the cause they may have honorably espoused.

Morbid anatomy is the source to which we must look for increase of knowledge in our profession. This branch has been extensively cultivated, but the fruits have not been gathered in. Many gentlemen have laboured long and assiduously since the example set by Mr. Hunter, the whole advantages of whose labours we have been, to use the mildest possible expression, *unfortunately* deprived of. Many, I say, have laboured long and assiduously, and none more so than my friend Mr. Langstaff, who possesses as the result of his individual exertions the best museum of morbid anatomy in the kingdom. Dr. Farre has also laboured long, and moreover has commenced the harvest in a

manner that will be found worthy of imitation. He has watched over symptoms, compared results on dissection, noted similar symptoms and applied remedies not only in one or two, but in very many cases, and not only in the illnesses immediately preceding death, but the illnesses of years in succession; and he believes that he has thus acquired a power of knowing, that certain symptoms, hitherto supposed deceptive, are in concomitance with certain internal diseased actions, that remedies, if had recourse to within a given time, will cause a cessation of that action and effect recovery; but that after the occurrence of other symptoms, no remedies but such as are palliative can be applied. He believes also that he can trace back from dissections alterations in structure corresponding to before-noted symptoms. Such appears to be the best method of acquiring the advantages of morbid anatomy; and the public feeling, that the family attendant, knowing the constitution of those he may have long attended, has the best chance of giving them relief, secures the opportunity required to almost every practitioner, but the minute anatomy of structure is not sufficiently known to enable us to detect trifling alterations from disease, and that knowledge being at this period a great desideratum, Dr. Farre has established, and will in a few weeks open, a school for the cultivation of minute morbid anatomy, where all that is known will be taught, and where every exertion will be made for the increase of that branch of knowledge; from whence also will be obtainable at all times an individual versed in such dissection, should any gentleman desire aid in case of post mortem examination, either from disinclination to operate himself, or from a consciousness that general practice has so occupied his mind as to have removed from him the probability of conducting such examination to the best account. Thus, gentlemen, we have reason to hope that in a little time post mortem examinations will be conducted not only with a view to the organ the disease of which may have caused death, but with a view to all the structures of the body; and not only with reference to the last illness, but with reference to the illnesses of many years; and if possible to trace back the alterations of structure correspondent to the previously noted symptoms. Deprived as we have been of the knowledge of all that Mr. Hunter did, I say Dr. Farre has gathered in the first fruits of morbid anatomy in a manner that is worthy of imitation, in a manner that proves his industrious exercise of a mind highly judicious, highly endowed, extensively cultivated, and teeming with the best feelings of benevolence towards his suffering fellow-creatures. In Mr. Langstaff's museum will be found preparations which, in connexion with circumstances belonging to the cases, seem to contradict some recently

published physiological opinions, and I cannot but believe that morbid anatomy, if extensively and *profitably* pursued, will lead to correct physiological knowledge.

Pathological opinions and practical conduct have undergone considerable change as a result of the promulgation of Mr. Hunter's opinions, that the *actions of vessels* are concerned in the production of disease, a change in all probability greater than Mr. Hunter himself contemplated, since it does not appear that he calculated on a total forgetfulness of every point of humoral pathology. Men of considerable talents with extensive opportunities, and not deficient in industrious exertions, successors of that peculiar and conspicuous character, have entertained opinions that certain organs exert more influence over general disease than others, but they mostly differ as to which organ, and therefore *all* cannot be right; but the term inflammation seems to be by nearly all adopted as characteristic of their pathological views, and the abstraction of blood their practical means; thus, the blood, from which Mr. Hunter's opinions were calculated to remove some portion of the odium of disease, suffers more than it did previous to its being so relieved from this heavy accusation.

The increase of anatomical knowledge has led to great improvements in operative surgery; and the most judicious and experienced operator, of the last thirty years, will ever hold a high rank in the esteem of his professional brethren, which he deserves, not only from his quick yet correct perception and indefatigable industry, but from his display of that noble spirit which never condescended to utter a single expression that could be construed into the degradation of any one of his less successful contemporaries. This, gentlemen, we can all imitate; all may not possess nerve for operations, but all can, if they will, be liberal. It must not be forgotten that a surgeon has, by his own energy, established an hospital in this great town, it is true a very small one; but it has notwithstanding, in the course of the first year of its existence, done more to improve one of the most interesting portions of operative surgery than has been done for several years; I mean the establishment of the fact that aneurisms so situated as to preclude the operation of tying the artery between the tumour and the heart, may be successfully treated by tying the vessel beyond the tumour.

At the same time that many individuals adopted different organs to which they might grant their more particular attention, and this

immediately after the reception of Mr. Hunter's views of diseased actions of vessels, ONE set himself to think how these said vessels were influenced in the production of disease, and being led to believe that their actions must be under the influence of the nervous system generally, he set himself further to think of the best means to keep the nervous system in a state likely to influence them only to healthy actions; and the result of long observation, aided certainly by the most acute mental perceptions, was the conclusion, that this desirable object could only be obtained by attention to the due performance of the functions of *all* the organs of the body, with particular reference to those intimately connected with vitality or more subject to the external causes of disease.

This individual has shown the mutual influence of the different organs on each other, the dependance of local disease on the general system of general derangement on local disease; and thus has shown that in no disease, however to all appearance local, should the general actions of the system be lost sight of. I presume it will be admitted by all that the digestive organs are intimately connected with vitality, since support must be obtained through them, and through them must be applied your remedial measures; and these circumstances prove that they are more than commonly subject to external causes of derangement. This individual has shown by cases that the most dangerous symptoms of general disorder, and the most malignant actions of local disease, are under the influence of this set of organs. These views more beautifully simple yet more extensively applicable than any that have been promulgated have, notwithstanding their direction to the whole system, been denominated hobbyhorsical; and thus have they robbed the particular organic theorists of a title much more applicable to them. The time will come when these opinions shall obtain the credit they deserve, and if we now look abroad we shall see them pretty generally acted on, although without due acknowledgement, which I attribute to the circumstance of professional men having assumed a blind that prevents their seeing more than a small portion of this consistent whole, a blind which prevents all who adopt it from seeing any thing more than mere directions for the stomach and bowels or the administration of blue pill.

The third object of the society I have already stated to be the engendering good feeling among the different members of the profession, with a view to obtain from the public that respect which we deserve, and the meetings of the society is perhaps the only arrange-

ment it could enter into to effect this desirable object; but there is reason to believe that an alteration in the state of the profession would effect it. If every individual were to undergo the same professional education, and at the termination of his studies select for his further pursuit whichever branch his talents, connexion, or purse might induce him to expect success from, then individual respect would be entertained: and why should the general practitioner be less professionally educated than the physician?—is it that the former sees six or eight patients to the latter's one? or that the purses of the six or eight may be the less deep? Why should the operating surgeon be less professionally educated than the physician?—is it because he has to perform operations that may give rise to more alarming disease than generally falls under the observation of the latter? Could such education be effected, each member of the profession would respect his brother, and command the respect of the public. Then a consultation would be what it is termed, instead of a mere transfer of the suffering individual from the care of the practical man to that of the more learned. I do not advocate the non-division of professional practice; I only advocate the non-division of professional education, since it must, I think, be by all admitted that physicians manage the therapœa in a manner very superior to the best among our most intelligent surgeons. Similar views of professional education have been made public, as entertained by Mr. Carmichael, of Dublin; and I am pleased to find that my opinions accord with those of that gentleman on more than one point. His treatise on that class of diseases termed venereal seems to me to have been corroborated by my own observations and experience, and therefore I should recommend it to public confidence, but that there appears to be no knowledge on this subject: I say no knowledge, for men of great yet equal talents, equal opportunities, and equal acquirements, give directions and express opinions diametrically opposed to each other; and yet this deficiency of knowledge exists at a period of great boastings. Ought we not rather to consider ourselves liable to reflection for having done so little in addition to the new matter presented to us by Mr. Hunter? Is it to be boasted of, that we have put out of view every point of humoral pathology? Is it to be boasted of, that we have lost sight of the different temperaments, while the circumstance of different individuals requiring a modified treatment for similar disease obliges us to have recourse to the less expressive term—peculiarity of constitution?

One of the boasts of modern surgery, union, by the first inten-

tion, was advocated more than a hundred and twenty years ago by Belloste, who published a book for the express purpose, "The Hospital Surgeon," and the vaunted humanity of substituting the potential for the actual cautery sinks beneath the proof that moxa is infinitely more effective as a counterirritant and incomparably less painful. I would guard the juniors in the profession from the deceptive and dangerous idea, that so much has been done of late as to authorize their quiescent adoption of all that may be taught. I would advise them to avail themselves of the opportunities now offered of acquiring knowledge, guarding themselves from the prejudices that most teachers are calculated to impress. The positive facts should be received and treasured, but the slightest expression detrimental to the opinions of others should excite a determination to have the opportunity to judge of those opinions for themselves. Thus would the student obtain and combine all the advantages that each organic theorist, by more devoted attention to his favorite organ, is calculated to present; thus would he strengthen himself to avoid the weak excuse that he has not studied under this or that teacher, or read this or that book, because the doctrines of the one or the writings of the other may have been said to be fraught with matter of questionable import. Men with minds thus cultivated become dignified in their conduct, since such cultivation cannot be acquired in the closet, but in community with their superiors; and such is the influence of our profession over the middle, the most valuable, rank of society, that it is a duty we owe our country to avoid setting an example either of immorality or irreligion. Men with minds thus cultivated entering into practice, no matter in which branch, with a determination to pursue morbid anatomy by undeviating observation previous, and extensive examining subsequent, to death, will soon have opportunities to correct false impressions, to corroborate true ones, and thus will be established true physiology, correct pathology, and good practice.———Then will every member of our profession command the respect of his brother and of the public.———This desirable state of things cannot, however, be effected, gentlemen, by disseminating the means of discord; it must be attempted by our every exertion to encourage union.

THE END.